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ABSTRACT

Underage drinking is a serious national problem--alcohol-related injuries are a leading cause of death and injury among young people in the United States today. This guide is designed to help individuals who wish to be involved in a national effort to prevent underage drinking. It includes materials and messages that can be reproduced, as well as other information that can be tailored for a specific community or audience. The guide will help in creating a broad-based public education program to communicate to neighbors the seriousness of the teen drinking problem and to motivate community members to become a part of the solution. Some of the topics addressed here include ways to create a teen drinking prevention program in one's community, including sample letters to elected officials and establishments that sell alcohol. Also detailed are the role of the spokesperson and strategies for gaining access to the news media, such as effective ways to communicate with reporters and editors, techniques for targeting messages and audiences, some sample press releases, some sample opinion editorials, and examples of public service announcements for radio. (RJM)

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ED 397 359

Teen Drinking Prevention Program

Communicator's Guide

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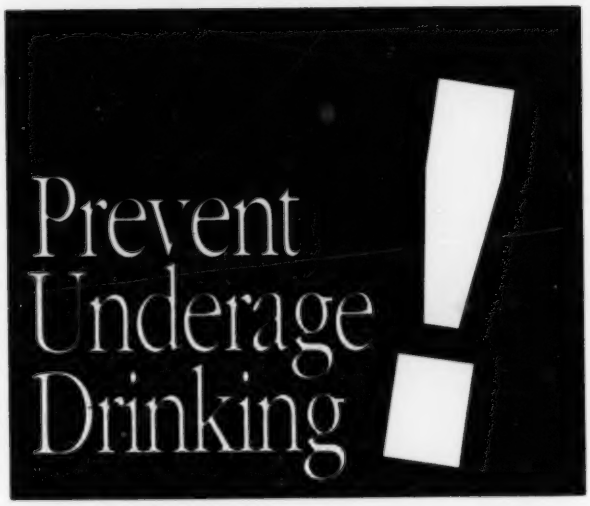


Know The Facts.
Prevention WORKS!

Dear Program Partners:

Alcohol-related incidents are a leading cause of death and injury among young people in America today. Teen drinking is a serious problem with numerous causes and consequences. Your involvement in preventing underage drinking will help your community build a grassroots network to challenge and change those standards, norms, myths, and misconceptions that make it too easy for too many teens to drink too much—so often with frightening consequences.

The CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program is based on innovative public health techniques and has four objectives:

- Raising public awareness of the underage drinking crisis.
- Changing community norms that encourage underage drinking.
- Creating community-specific prevention messages and materials.
- Ensuring that special events in a community encourage healthy lifestyle choices.

This *Communicator's Guide* is designed to assist you and your community in becoming part of SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's (CSAP) national effort to prevent underage drinking. The guide includes certain materials and messages that you can reproduce "as is" and others that you can tailor for your community or specific audience.

This guide will help you create a broad-based public education program to communicate to your neighbors the seriousness of the teen drinking problem and to motivate them to become part of the solution.

You will notice that all the CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program materials incorporate the program tag line *"Prevent Underage Drinking! Know the Facts."* and feature a consistent graphics treatment. We suggest that you incorporate these graphic elements into your local products as much as possible. A consistent look and message will strengthen the program's overall effectiveness.

My thanks in advance for your participation.

Elaine M. Johnson, Ph.D.
Director, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Table of Contents

Why Create A Teen Drinking Prevention Program? 4

What Are Community Norms? 4
Changing Community Norms 4
How Will This Guide Help Me? 4
Prevention Strategies and Activities 5
Product Development and Distribution 5
What Will Be the Role of the Communication Process? 5
Media Relations 6
Communicating With Elected State and Local Officials and Community Leaders 6
Sample Letters 7
Letter to Sales Outlets 7
Letter to State and Local Elected Official/Legislator/ Enforcement Official 8

The Role of the Spokesperson 9

Your Local Program Spokesperson 9
Sample Speech 10

Gaining Access to the News Media 12

Communicating With Reporters and Editors 12
Pitch Letters 12
Phone Calls 12
News Conferences 13
Targeting Messages and Audiences, Selecting Media Outlets, and Building Media Lists 13
Public Service Announcements 14
Sample Press Releases 15
Program Announcement 15
Administrative License Revocation Program 16
Mayor's Participation 17
Youth Driver's Licensing 18
Sample News Feature 19
Sample Opinion Editorials 20
General 20
The Influence of Alcohol Advertising 21
Alcohol Education 22
Dram Shop Laws/Server Education 23
The Influence of Alcohol Advertising 24
Letter to the Editor 25
Sample PSAs for Radio 26
Length: 10 Seconds 26
Length: 20 Seconds 26
Length: 30 Seconds 26

Materials To Be Reproduced 27

Print PSAs 27
Point-of-Purchase Display Card 29

Appendix: Radio Public Service Guide 30

Why Create a Teen Drinking Prevention Program?

Underage drinking is a serious national problem with many causes and no simple solutions. The problem is widespread and affects us all. Finding a lasting solution will require changing community norms. It will require building a communitywide network with numerous prevention partners, including prevention professionals, public health and safety officials, business and community leaders, volunteers, elected officials, educators, the religious community, and teens themselves.

What Are Community Norms?

Norms are standard behaviors, those actions that we expect of others and often take for granted. A norm is a behavior that we are taught, either consciously or unconsciously. Unfortunately, some learned behaviors can be detrimental to our health and safety, such as drinking too much alcohol or, in the case of young people, drinking any alcohol at all.

The critical goal of the CSAP Teen Drinking Prevention Program is for communities to look at themselves and the messages given by themselves and by society as a whole. What are standard community behaviors saying to young people concerning alcohol? Ask yourself the following questions:

- When alcohol is served in your home, is a nonalcoholic alternative beverage also offered?
- Are underage youth served alcohol in your home and in the establishments you visit?
- Is the 21-year-old drinking age strictly enforced within your community, or do vendors and enforcement officials look the other way?
- Are there events within your community that are built around drinking as a form of entertainment, such as beer blasts and keg parties?
- Is alcohol education part of the elementary and secondary school curricula in your community?
- Is teen drinking considered a "safe" alternative to illicit drug use?

In answering these questions, individuals and communities will see what message patterns are being given to young people. Are their actions giving tacit approval to underage drinking?

Changing Community Norms

The challenge before your community is to identify those norms that permit and encourage rather than discourage drinking by young people, and then build your communication program around the goal of changing those norms. For example, some communities will demand stricter enforcement of the laws concerning the purchase and possession of alcohol by persons under 21 years of age. Another community may discover that young residents know little of the real dangers of drinking; that community will begin an alcohol education program to ensure that their youth know the real facts.

Some of the sample materials contained in this guide target specific issues that your community might identify as factors that contribute to the prevalence of underage drinking. These include lax enforcement of the 21-year-old drinking laws, alcohol advertising that targets young people, or local laws concerning driver's license revocation or blood alcohol levels. These materials will help you build a campaign that targets such a norm and creates a public demand for change.

How Will This Guide Help Me?

This guide will help you create a broad-based public awareness and education program. It provides communication products ready for reproduction, as well as strategies, concepts, and ideas that you can easily incorporate into your local effort.

Planning for your local campaign should include the following:

- Prevention strategies and activities
- Product development and distribution
- Media relations
- Communication with local elected officials and community leaders

Prevention Strategies and Activities

Young people drink for many reasons: to fit in with the crowd, to feel grown up, or to cope with their feelings. There are, however, several "protective" strategies that can help foster healthy behavior in our young people.

Your community should strive to

- Present a clear no-use message in the family, the community, and the media.
- Identify specific community norms or factors that permit or encourage teen drinking rather than discourage it and target your efforts toward changing those norms.
- Provide prevention programs for young people at early ages.
- Build communitywide networks to create well-coordinated prevention programs with many working partners.
- Provide young people with the real facts about the dangers of drinking and with the ability to resist the pressure to drink that they receive from their peers and through advertising.
- Educate parents and other adults about the warning signs of alcohol use by children, the effects of their own alcohol use on a child's behavior, and where to go for help if needed.
- Inform citizens of the seriousness of underage drinking and motivate them to change those community norms that assist rather than discourage teen drinking.

Product Development and Distribution

Products that deliver the program's message will be an important part of the entire effort. Artwork for a number of such products is included in this guide. These materials have been pretested and, we believe, will be effective in delivering healthy messages to teens and adults alike. They are available to you for reproduction and/or for tailoring to your community or specific audiences.

You will notice that all the products incorporate the program tag line, as well as a consistent graphic treatment. If your community supplements these products with ones produced locally, we recommend that you continue to use a graphic treatment similar to that of the national pieces. A similar look in all program elements will strengthen the effectiveness of the overall effort.

A well-developed distribution plan is the foundation of any successful communication effort. No brochure, poster, or flyer can be effective if it never reaches its intended audience. Early in your campaign planning, you should identify target audiences and distribution methods. When identifying target audiences, consider the following:

- Community-based organizations
- Churches and synagogues
- Government agencies
- Schools and educators
- Sales outlets
- Health organizations and professionals
- Prevention professionals
- News media
- Youth organizations
- Safety and enforcement agencies
- Elected officials

Such organizations and individuals can act as intermediaries and carry your message to their members, participants, employees, and readers.

What Will Be the Role of the Public Communication Process?

Although the Teen Drinking Prevention Program is a program of group-to-group and person-to-person information exchange and persuasion, making the general public aware of the efforts and messages of the local campaign will have the effect of multiplying the message many times over.

Tools you can use to communicate your program's information include the following:

- Advertising

- Audio and visual presentations
- Brochures
- Contests and promotions
- Direct mail
- Displays and exhibits
- Media interviews
- News features and news releases
- Newsletters
- Open houses
- Outdoor advertising/billboards
- Photo opportunities
- PSAs (public service announcements)
- Seminars
- Speeches
- Survey research
- Statement stuffers

Elements of Successful Public Communication Programs

To communicate successfully, remember to...

❒ Choose your goals. Before you begin, know specifically what you want to accomplish (e.g., media coverage of the dangers of underage drinking, PSA placements).

❒ Define your audience and learn as much about the group as you can. The more carefully you define your audience, the better chance you have of communicating with it.

❒ Determine your message and keep it short, simple, and direct.

❒ Describe the desired behavior. Tell your audience what you want them to do and appeal to the self-interest and issues that are important to them; motivate the audience to action.

❒ Determine the media. There are numerous ways to communicate with your audience—newspapers, radio, television, special events, and so on. Select the media that best suit your message and can deliver the deepest reach into your target audiences.

❒ Select from the wide array of public relations activities those that best suit your message and will reach your audience.

Media Relations

The news media play a critical role in delivering information to people and in educating them. The reach and success of your teen drinking prevention program will depend, in part, on media coverage of it as a newsworthy event. Because of the importance of gaining media coverage for your local efforts, an entire section of this guide is devoted to working with the news media.

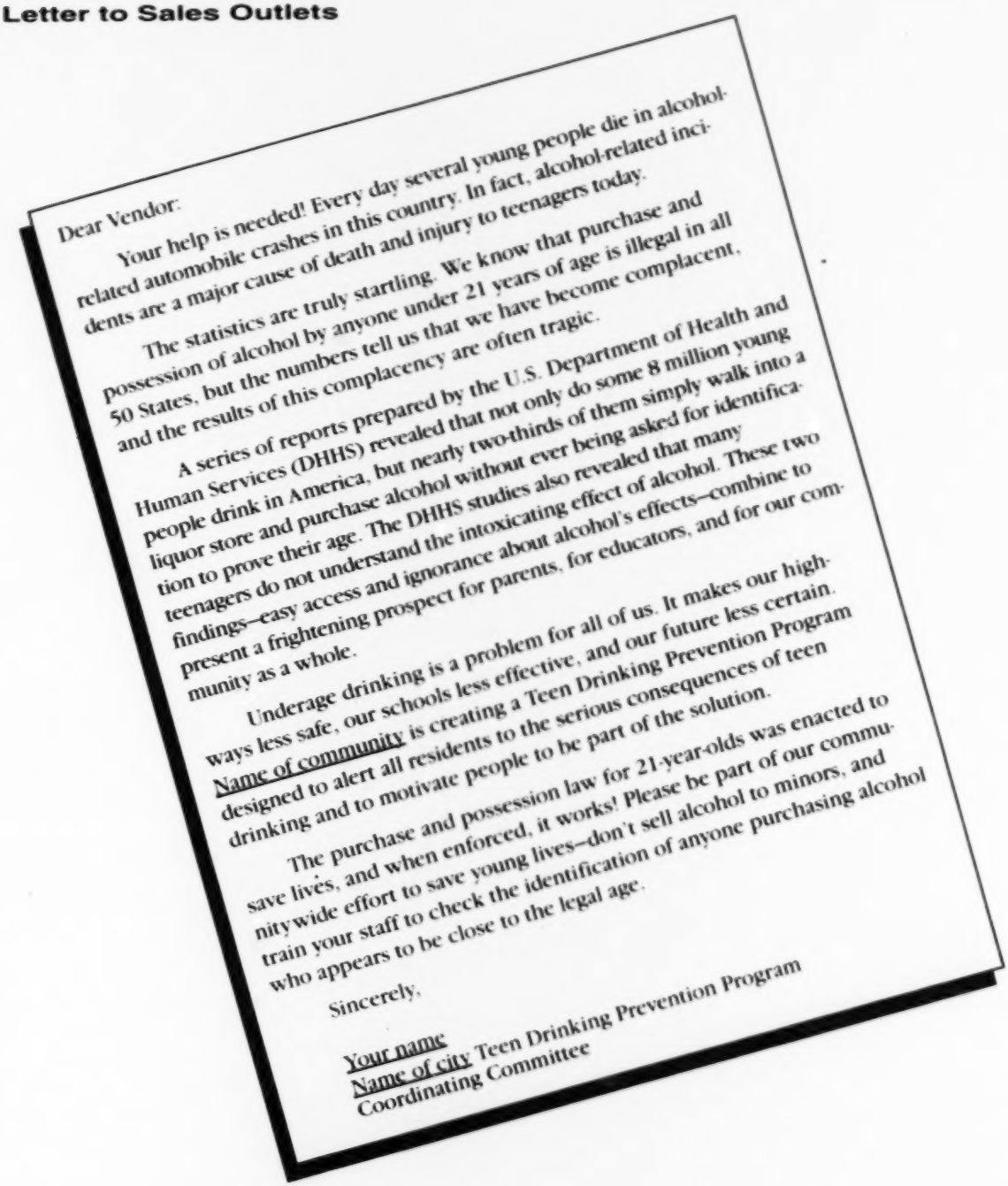
Communicating With Elected State and Local Officials and Community Leaders

Local elected officials and community leaders are important to your teen drinking prevention program in two ways. As community leaders, they can influence what people think and how they act. As legislators and elected officials, they have the capacity to create or change programs or policies. As opinion leaders and lawmakers, these officials and community leaders will play key roles in changing community norms that now encourage rather than discourage underage drinking.

A set of sample letters is included in this guide. Grassroots letter-writing campaigns can be extremely effective. Constituent mail does influence officeholders!

Sample Letters

Letter to Sales Outlets



Dear Vendor:

Your help is needed! Every day several young people die in alcohol-related automobile crashes in this country. In fact, alcohol-related incidents are a major cause of death and injury to teenagers today.

The statistics are truly startling. We know that purchase and possession of alcohol by anyone under 21 years of age is illegal in all 50 States, but the numbers tell us that we have become complacent, and the results of this complacency are often tragic.

A series of reports prepared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) revealed that not only do some 8 million young people drink in America, but nearly two-thirds of them simply walk into a liquor store and purchase alcohol without ever being asked for identification to prove their age. The DHHS studies also revealed that many teenagers do not understand the intoxicating effect of alcohol. These two findings—easy access and ignorance about alcohol's effects—combine to present a frightening prospect for parents, for educators, and for our community as a whole.

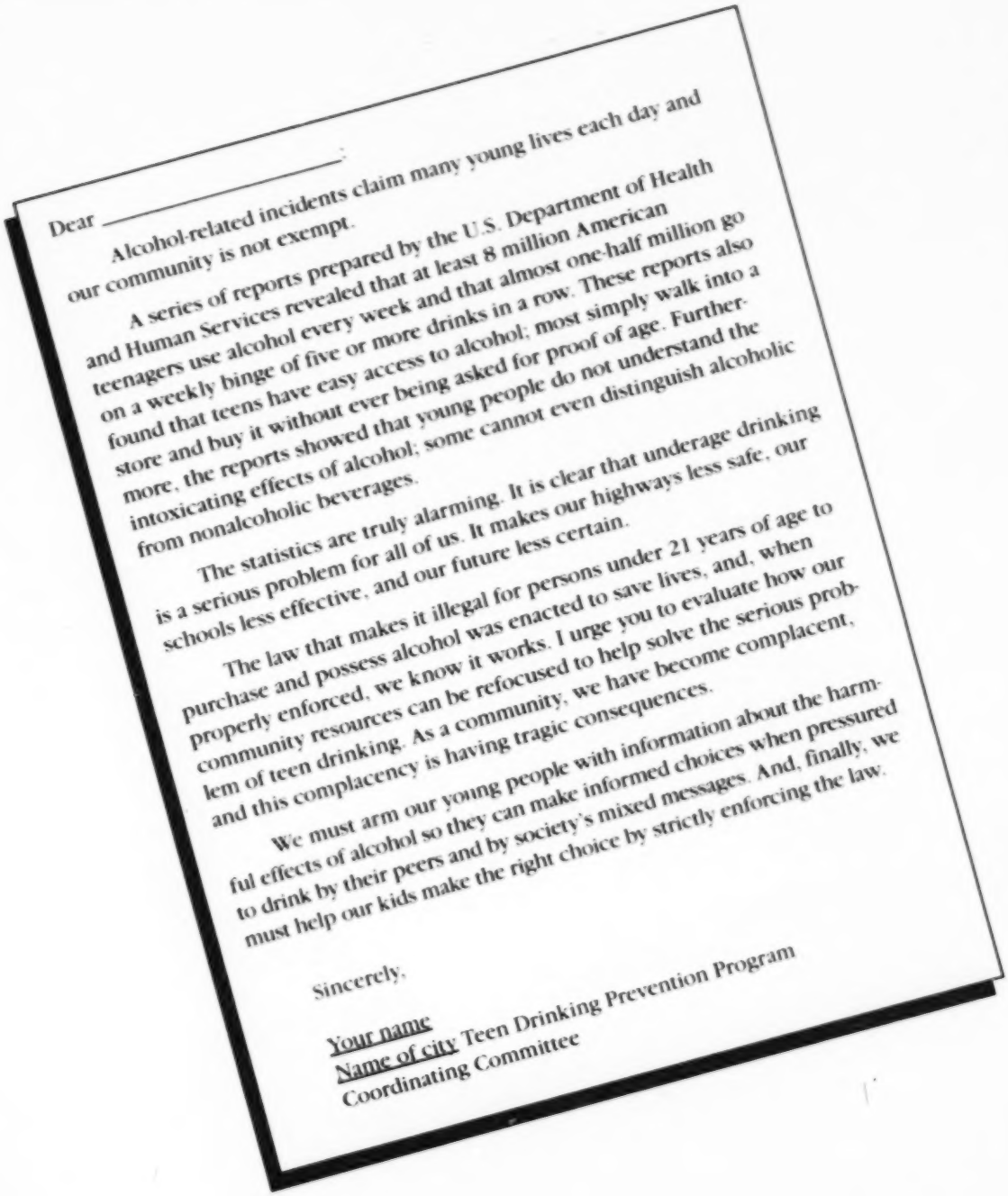
Underage drinking is a problem for all of us. It makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. Name of community is creating a Teen Drinking Prevention Program designed to alert all residents to the serious consequences of teen drinking and to motivate people to be part of the solution.

The purchase and possession law for 21-year-olds was enacted to save lives, and when enforced, it works! Please be part of our community-wide effort to save young lives—don't sell alcohol to minors, and train your staff to check the identification of anyone purchasing alcohol who appears to be close to the legal age.

Sincerely,

Your name
Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Program
Coordinating Committee

Letter to State and Local Elected Official/Legislator/Enforcement Official



Dear _____:

Alcohol-related incidents claim many young lives each day and our community is not exempt.

A series of reports prepared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services revealed that at least 8 million American teenagers use alcohol every week and that almost one-half million go on a weekly binge of five or more drinks in a row. These reports also found that teens have easy access to alcohol; most simply walk into a store and buy it without ever being asked for proof of age. Furthermore, the reports showed that young people do not understand the intoxicating effects of alcohol; some cannot even distinguish alcoholic from nonalcoholic beverages.

The statistics are truly alarming. It is clear that underage drinking is a serious problem for all of us. It makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain.

The law that makes it illegal for persons under 21 years of age to purchase and possess alcohol was enacted to save lives, and, when properly enforced, we know it works. I urge you to evaluate how our community resources can be refocused to help solve the serious problem of teen drinking. As a community, we have become complacent, and this complacency is having tragic consequences.

We must arm our young people with information about the harmful effects of alcohol so they can make informed choices when pressured to drink by their peers and by society's mixed messages. And, finally, we must help our kids make the right choice by strictly enforcing the law.

Sincerely,

Your name
Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Program
Coordinating Committee

Your Local Program Spokesperson

Members of your local coordinating committee will be important spokespersons for your local program. Recruiting a local official or VIP to help spread the message will boost your efforts. The mayor or a local elected official is a likely candidate. Celebrity spokespersons, such as a local athlete or a media or music industry personality, may also be extremely effective, but they must be selected carefully because of the media scrutiny that surrounds such persons. Certain spokespersons will be more effective with certain audiences than with others, so having multiple spokespersons may be a good idea.

Opportunities for program spokespersons will include interviews with news reporters, radio and television interview shows, fraternal and civic meetings, and community meetings and forums. Any spokesperson, however, can only be effective if he or she is well prepared to deliver the message.

Presentation Outline

When speaking to public forums and organization meetings...

❒ **Learn all you can about your audience before your presentation. What will the composition of the audience be? What is important to them?**

❒ **Introduce yourself and your subject. Explain who you are, why you are there, and what you plan to talk about.**

❒ **Speak to your audience. Use personal language like "us" and "we." Speak in terms audience members will understand and about things they care about, like the community, their families, and so on. Avoid using acronyms that they will not understand.**

❒ **Involve the audience while also gauging their knowledge of the underage drinking problem. Use a limited number of "startling statistics" and visuals to grab their attention.**

❒ **Once you have the audience's attention, put it to good use. Sound a call to action. Suggest specific actions they can take to be part of the solution to the underage drinking problem.**

❒ **Be sensitive to your listeners' attention span. Once you have made your point, summarize and end your remarks.**

Talking Points for Presentations and Media Interviews

❒ **Underage drinking is a serious national problem. Alcohol use is the number one drug problem among young people.**

❒ **At least 8 million young people use alcohol every week, and nearly one-half million are binge drinkers–drinking five or more drinks in a row.**

❒ **Alcohol-related traffic crashes are a leading cause of death and injury among teenagers.**

❒ **Alcohol use is also associated with poor performance in school, truancy, rape, drownings, fights, assaults, and vandalism.**

❒ **Because of loopholes and lax enforcement, the 21-year-old drinking age is largely a myth. Teenagers get their alcohol the easy way: they walk into a store and buy it!**

❒ **Teenagers are for the most part grossly misinformed about the effects of alcohol, and some even have trouble differentiating between alcoholic and nonalcoholic beverages.**

❒ **Delaying the age of first use of alcohol beyond the childhood and adolescent years can reduce the risk of alcohol and other drug problems later.**

❒ **Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Program is designed to give local communities the communication tools and strategies to create a grassroots effort to raise public concern about underage drinking and to motivate the community to change the community and social norms that encourage drinking by those underage.**

Summary Statement

It is too easy for too many youth to drink, and that is a problem for all of us. It makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. We all have to be part of the solution. Prevention works!

All spokespersons need to be armed with the message and must be able to deliver it clearly and succinctly in heartfelt and quotable phrases. Obviously, strong verbal skills are a critical prerequisite for any spokesperson.

A presentation outline, talking points, and a sample speech are included in this guide. They are important preparation tools for any spokesperson.

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Sample Speech

Good morning/afternoon/evening and thank you for the opportunity to speak to you today/tonight. I am here to talk about an issue that affects us all. Although the problem involves young people, the causes and the often tragic results belong to all of us.

Alcohol and alcohol-related incidents are a leading cause of death and injury among teenagers in America. In the few hours we spend together this morning/afternoon/evening, somewhere in our country a teenager will die because of the combination of alcohol and automobiles.

These frightening statistics go on and on. At least 8 million young people use alcohol every week, and nearly one-half million go on a weekly binge of five or more drinks in a row. Forty-one percent of the college student population drinks heavily, and almost half of all college students get drunk once a month.

There is no question that underage drinking is a serious problem. The question is what you and I can do about it. And that is why I would like to talk to you about a teen drinking prevention program.

This program was initiated by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, U.S. Public Health Service. The program is designed to give local communities and concerned citizens the tools and strategies to address the teen drinking problem at the grassroots level.

Part of the solution will be to communicate directly with our teens. We want to convince them that alcohol is not glamorous and, in fact, that it is dangerous, that it will not make them popular or sexy or successful, but it could rob them of their future. These are the messages we must get to them, but with the many mixed messages they're already receiving, these messages alone will not be enough.

We also have to communicate with the community at large, and, as a community, we have to work together to change those community norms that encourage drinking by teenagers.

I mentioned mixed messages. In our own homes and families, the message about drinking is probably a mixed one. Often the message alcohol advertising attempts to deliver to young people is not the one we want them to receive. Pay attention to these ads for the next few days. What impression do they leave on youthful minds? They appear to be saying to our young people that drinking this beer or that beer will get you the girl or the sports car. They're leaving the impression that drinking beer goes well with swimming, skiing, and other high-risk recreational activities.

12

Sample Speech Continued

Now, you might say that we all know better than to have a few drinks and then attempt to swim an ocean. But the sad truth is that many of our young people do not know better. Alcohol-related drownings are a major cause of death among teenagers.

Why would a young person go swimming when he or she has been drinking? One answer is that most young people do not understand alcohol and its intoxicating effects. A series of studies recently released by the U.S. Surgeon General revealed that two out of three students cannot distinguish alcoholic beverages from nonalcoholic ones and that most do not understand the concept of alcohol content and do not know the relative strength of different types of alcohol and combinations of alcohol.

The Surgeon General also reported that, and I'm quoting, "loopholes, laxity, and lip service" make the 21-year-old drinking law largely a myth. The result of this laxity is that two-thirds of the teenagers who drink get their alcohol the easy way: they walk into a store and buy it! And I can assure you, ladies and gentlemen, it is happening right here in our city/town/community.

Simply put, it's just too easy for too many youth to drink, and that's a problem for all of us. It makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. We all have to be part of the solution. Prevention works!

Specifically—

- If you have teenagers, talk to them, and make sure they know the real facts of alcohol use and its very serious consequences.
- Support the enforcement of the purchase and possession law for persons under 21 years of age in your own family, and shop only at those sales outlets in the community that also obey the law.
- And, finally, become active in the Teen Drinking Prevention Program, which is being created right here in name of city. There are a number of products available to help you spread our important message that alcohol and youth do not mix.

If you want more information about the project, please feel free to speak to me individually today or call me at _____.

Thank you for your time and attention. I hope you will agree it was a wise investment in our community and our future.

Thank you.

Gaining Access to the News Media

The news media will be a critical partner in your community's effort to inform and motivate persons to be part of the effort to prevent underage drinking. Learning what works in a publicity campaign will greatly increase the chances of successfully placing your message with the right media outlets, the ones that reach your target audiences and have credibility with them.

Informing the public is the purpose of the news media; in fact, that is a shared goal of both the media and this program. Your role as a community program organizer will be to deliver information to the news media on the size and seriousness of the teen drinking problem and the community's response to it.

The information you present to the news media must be timely and significant—in other words, newsworthy. Take a look at the following suggestions:

- Initiate stories when the local town council, county board of supervisors, or even the State legislature is considering a bill that relates to underage drinking. Relate the program or campaign goal to a recent drinking or drinking and driving tragedy that has taken place within the community, or connect an upcoming holiday with the predictable rise in drinking-related auto crashes.

- Localize the issue. Relate a national policy, initiative, or statistic to what's happening in your community. Quote local elected or community leaders. Relate human interest stories involving local residents. (Unfortunately, these stories are often human tragedies.)

Communicating With Reporters and Editors

The press release is the most common method of communicating with journalists. It is the publicist's basic tool and is designed to interest the media in learning more about an event and/or covering an issue or topic. However, large media operations receive hundreds of press releases every day. To ensure that yours is read, you must use the style and format the media prefers.

Other ways to communicate with journalists include pitch letters, phone calls, and press conferences. Use pitch letters and phone calls frequently and reserve the press conference for the truly newsworthy event.

Pitch Letters

When a topic is important and deserves news coverage but is not built around a news event, a pitch letter is a good way of interesting a reporter or editor in the issue. The same rules for writing a press release should be followed in writing a pitch letter. Be brief, get to the point quickly, and answer the five W's—who, what, when, where, and why. The best person to send a pitch letter to is a news editor, assignment editor, or reporter who has shown interest in your topic or a related topic.

Phone Calls

News reporters are extremely busy people, especially when working against a tight deadline,

Suggestions for Writing Press Releases

❒ Begin with the most important facts. The first one or two paragraphs (called the lead) should present the who, what, when, where, why, and how. In other words, get to the point immediately. The rest of the release should be written in an inverted pyramid format with the most important information at the top and the least important details at the bottom. Most releases are between four and six paragraphs and certainly no longer than two pages.

❒ Accuracy is critical. Check your facts and make sure they are correct, especially names, dates, and titles.

❒ Use short sentences and paragraphs. Be brief.

❒ Write factually and objectively. Avoid editorializing and overusing adjectives.

❒ Be sure to quote local officials and include local examples and initiatives. The local angle is your strongest selling point with local media.

❒ Avoid using acronyms as much as possible. If you use them, make sure they are defined (written out) immediately following their first use.

Sample press releases may be found at the end of this section.

but you may be able to interest them in your story by phone. Collect your facts before you make the call and get to the point quickly. It is often wise to learn a reporter's deadline—usually in the late afternoon—and avoid calling then.

News Conferences

A news conference can be an excellent mechanism for communicating a news event to a large number of reporters at one time. However, calling a news conference and having no reporters show up is like throwing a party and having no one come. Call a news conference only when you have something important or newsworthy to announce and can involve a local official or celebrity who will attract news coverage.

If you decide to hold a news conference, notify all media within your market 3 to 5 days before the event. News conferences are best held in the morning or *early* afternoon to accommodate reporters' deadlines.

Keep in mind the following checklist when scheduling your news conference:

- Choose a location that is large enough to accommodate reporters, photographers, and camera crews.
- Ensure that there are enough electrical outlets.
- Have a visual and the campaign name and logo in a prominent place near the speaker. Visuals can include a banner, podium sign, undersized campaign poster, or relevant charts and diagrams.
- Hand out copies of any prepared text and background information, fact sheets, and the like.

Targeting Messages and Audiences, Selecting Media Outlets, and Building Media Lists

Competition for media space and the public's attention is keen. To successfully deliver your message, you must carefully tailor your message for both the media and the audience.

Begin by identifying those groups you want to reach and which media and messages will best persuade them. Some audiences, prevention professionals or beverage vendors, for example, will have specific media targeted to them—frequently newsletters. Other audiences, such as suburban parents, may not have a specific medium, but viewer and readership studies will tell you about their media-watching and reading habits.

People pay attention to those messages that support their preexisting values and needs—messages that seem to speak directly to them. In localizing the national products and themes, it is critical to consider your local audiences. What are their values, concerns, and "hot buttons"? If you recruit a local figure or official to be a spokesperson for the program, select one who will be recognized, accessible, and credible to your target audiences. That may require having more than one spokesperson.

Media outlets and media markets come in all shapes and sizes. We all know of the traditional daily newspapers and evening news programs, but there are numerous other types of media outlets that will be critical to the success of your local campaign. In building your media list, do not overlook the following outlets:

- Weekly newspapers
- Free newspapers
- Supplements to major metropolitan newspapers, including Sunday magazines, calendar sections, suburban editions, and such
- TV public affairs programming and talk shows
- Cable TV news and public affairs programming
- Cable TV community bulletin boards
- Radio stations, especially all-news format stations
- School newspapers—high school and college
- Wire services and news syndicates

The size of your media market will in large part determine what media will work best for you. It is generally easier to attract news coverage, especially TV coverage, in smaller cities than

in large ones. In a large, very competitive media market, pursuing radio and print coverage will probably pay bigger dividends than pursuing TV coverage.

Most public libraries have media directories listing all outlets within a market. Your media list should include assignment editors at newspapers and radio and TV producers and reporters who regularly cover such topics as city hall, education, public safety, health, and youth.

Building a good media list can be a time-consuming process. Before beginning, check with the mayor's office or local prevention agency to see if they already have a local media list and will allow you to use it. If you need to build your own list, you can simplify the process of generating address labels for multiple mailings by using a computer database or word-processing software. The ability to sort your list (i.e., by radio news directors, editorial writers, talk show producers, etc.) also will help you target your mailings.

Public Service Announcements

Media use public service announcements (PSAs) to give free advertising time and space to an issue or cause. In the past, radio and television stations were obligated by law to devote a specific number of hours per month to public service messages. For the most part, these requirements no longer exist. However, most stations still recognize the importance of public service advertising and give time to PSAs. But because of the tremendous competition for this PSA time, your message must be well presented to the media and well targeted to the audience.

A PSA's format is extremely important. A TV PSA may be a completed piece of video 15 or 30 seconds long—such spots can be very effective, but they are also expensive to produce. A second type of TV PSA is a visual element with narrative copy, which is much less expensive to produce.

Radio stations are attractive outlets for PSAs. Radio is far more flexible and lends itself to live-copy PSA scripts, which usually are read by the on-air personality as time permits.

Summing Up: Foundations of a Successful Media Campaign

- ❒ Know your audience and target your message.
- ❒ Know the media. Select the outlet that reaches the audience you need to reach!
- ❒ Provide the media with the information they want, at the time they need it, and in a format they can use.
- ❒ Remember frequency and duration. The effectiveness of any communication program builds over time with repeated messages.
- ❒ Have a consistent and clear message. All campaign components should complement and reinforce each other.
- ❒ Communicate desired actions. Tell your various audiences what you want them to do.
- ❒ Finally, supplement your campaign with person-to-person and community activities. The combination of a media message plus specific activities in which people can become involved will be more effective than either one alone. Personal involvement increases the likelihood that the program will be perceived as important and will increase the program's opportunity to influence people's attitudes and behavior.

Sample PSA radio scripts can be found in the Radio Public Service Guide in the appendix. The longer scripts included may also be suitable for TV PSAs and editorial opinion segments.

Sample Press Releases

Tailor press releases for use in your city. Quote local leaders and provide a local contact name and phone number.

Program Announcement

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date
Local Contact:
Telephone #

New Program Seeks To Change Community Norms That Encourage Underage Drinking

Local citizens and organizations have combined to form the Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Committee and will undertake a communitywide program designed to identify and change those factors and community norms that encourage underage drinking.

Name of city is one of many cities nationwide participating in the Teen Drinking Prevention Program developed by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

The Teen Drinking Prevention Program is designed to raise community awareness of the seriousness of the underage drinking problem and deliver prevention messages to community leaders, public officials, health and prevention professionals, parents, educators, business leaders, and to teenagers themselves.

"At a time when our nation is struggling to contain health care costs, prevention is truly the best investment we can make. And the best place for prevention to begin is with young people," said Elaine M. Johnson, Ph.D., Director, CSAP.

The primary goal of the campaign will be to motivate communities to change community standards that encourage teen drinking. Secondary goals will be to (1) deglamorize the promotion and use of alcoholic beverages; (2) increase the number of teenagers who understand the risks associated with alcohol use; and (3) arm these young people with the power to resist the pressure to drink that they often get from peers and media messages.

"Teen drinking is a serious problem and affects all of us, sometimes in the most tragic ways," states local committee organizer. "This program is designed to rally all parts of the community and to evaluate our community standards that may be encouraging the problem."

Members of the local coordinating committee are (if available).

-X-

Administrative License Revocation Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date
Local Contact:
Telephone #

Local Teen Drinking Prevention Committee Recommends Administrative License Revocation Program

The Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Committee today called for new State regulations that would require the suspension or revocation of a minor's driver's license if he or she is convicted of alcohol purchase or possession.

"The privilege of driving is cherished by teenagers," said committee organizer. "The threat of losing their licenses will therefore have a real deterrent effect on young people when they think about drinking."

Numerous States have used Administrative License Revocation (ALR) programs to curb drinking and driving. Nationwide, many States have ALR programs in place, which allow a police officer to revoke the license of an intoxicated driver on the spot if the driver has a blood alcohol content of .10 or higher or refuses to take a Breathalyzer test.

The Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Committee is a communitywide network of citizens and organizations committed to identifying and changing those social attitudes and community standards that encourage underage drinking.

"How readily we penalize young people who break the law and purchase alcohol tells them just how serious we are about preventing underage drinking," states local committee organizer. "At a time when alcohol is claiming more young lives than any other cause, we as a community have to get tough about enforcing the 21-year-old drinking age."

-X-

Mayor's Participation

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date
Local Contact:
Telephone #

Name of City To Kick Off Teen Drinking Prevention Program; Mayor Signs Alcohol Awareness Month Proclamation

Calling teen alcohol use one of the "most serious problems that jeopardizes the future of our young people," Mayor _____ today announced Name of city's participation in a Teen Drinking Prevention Program developed by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

[While announcing the project, Mayor _____ also signed a city proclamation recognizing Month as Alcohol Awareness Month in Name of city.]

Name of city is one of a group of cities nationwide participating in the Teen Drinking Prevention Program. The program is designed to raise community awareness of the seriousness of the teen drinking problem and deliver prevention messages to community leaders, public officials, health and prevention professionals, parents, educators, business leaders, and the teenagers themselves.

The program's primary goal is to motivate communities to change the community standards and social attitudes that encourage teen drinking. Secondary goals will be to deglamorize the use of alcohol and to increase the number of teenagers who understand the risks associated with alcohol use. Local jurisdictions will be provided with the communication tools and strategies to conduct prevention programs at the local level.

Name of city's participation in the program will be coordinated by a local advisory committee. Members of the committee are (if available).

[Add local teen drinking stats if available]

-X-

Youth Driver's Licensing

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date
Local Contact:
Telephone #

Local Teen Drinking Prevention Committee Recommends Youth Driver's Licensing Program

A special licensing program designed to tie driving privileges to alcohol education and no alcohol use has been recommended to the city council by members of the Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Committee.

Under the program, a provisional license for young people under the age of 21 would be revocable for violations of alcohol purchase and possession laws and would require young drivers to complete an alcohol and impaired driving education program.

"The privilege of driving is cherished by teenagers," said committee organizer. "The threat of losing their license will therefore have a real deterrent effect on young people when they think about drinking," he/she said.

The Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Committee is a communitywide network of citizens and organizations committed to identifying and changing those social attitudes and community standards that encourage underage drinking.

"How readily we penalize young people who break the law and purchase alcohol tells them just how serious we are about preventing underage drinking," states local committee organizer. "At a time when alcohol is claiming more young lives than any other cause, we as a community have to get tough about enforcing the the 21-year-old drinking age."

-X-

Sample News Feature

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Date
Local Contact:
Telephone #

Changing Community Norms Offers Promise For Preventing Underage Drinking

The name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Program is targeted to changing community norms in an effort to prevent underage drinking since young people using alcohol is an extremely critical problem today. This program is designed to give local communities the tools and strategies to prevent teenagers from beginning to use alcohol and to educate those who do drink about the risks they are taking.

The Teen Drinking Prevention Program is a community effort and will provide health professionals, educators, public officials, law enforcement officers, community leaders, and youth with the communication tools and strategies needed to reduce the occurrence and acceptance of teenage drinking.

The program's primary goal will be to motivate communities to act to change those community norms that encourage teen drinking. The secondary goals of the program are to increase the number of teenagers who understand the risks associated with alcohol use and to arm these young people with the power to resist the pressures to drink that they often get from their peers and advertising.

CSAP, SAMHSA, in DHHS developed the Teen Drinking Prevention Program in response to a series of reports on underage drinking prepared by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. These reports revealed alarming information on the number of young people who drink, the amount they are consuming, their lack of knowledge regarding alcohol's effects, and the ease with which teenagers can purchase alcoholic beverages.

Nearly 8 million American teenagers drink alcohol every week, and at least one-half million go on a weekly binge of five or more drinks in a row. The reports also showed that large numbers of teenagers are able to purchase alcohol without proper identification.

Also found was that two out of three junior high school age students cannot distinguish alcoholic beverages from nonalcoholic ones. Most young people do not understand the concept of alcohol content and do not know the relative strength of different types of alcohol.

Each community must recognize the serious consequences of underage drinking. The name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Program is an opportunity for communities to work together and make their highways safer, their schools more effective, and the future of their young people more certain.

-X-

Sample Opinion Editorials

All newspapers and most television and radio stations carry editorial messages. As appropriate, share these suggested editorials with your local media or tailor one for your community.

General

Several young people die every day in alcohol-related car crashes. In response to this serious problem, name of city has launched a community-based teen drinking prevention program designed to provide the communications tools and strategies we need to establish programs to prevent underage drinking.

The primary goal of the program is to motivate our community to change those norms that encourage teen drinking. Secondary goals include increasing the number of teenagers who understand the risks associated with alcohol use and arming young people with the power to resist the pressure to drink that they often get from peers and media messages.

All members of our community need to recognize the serious consequences of underage drinking. It makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. Our community is joining others that are taking action and establishing a program initially developed by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services. Let's make it less acceptable and more difficult for youth to drink!

- Prevention Works!

-X-

The Influence of Alcohol Advertising

Alcohol use by teenagers may be illegal, but it's certainly not uncommon in our community. The question isn't whether teens are drinking, but why and how to curtail the serious amount of underage drinking that's putting them and our community at risk.

The glamorization of alcohol and mixed messages about its use have a very real effect on our community, particularly our young people.

Advertising is a powerful educational tool in America. Young people are deluged with promotions for alcoholic beverages, from the media, from billboards, and at sporting and entertainment events. Too often a teenager's only information about alcohol comes from advertising and his or her peers. Neither is a very reliable source.

Much of the work has to be done at the local level, including in our community. Clear messages will produce clear-headed behavior. Communities should teach youth to be educated consumers of all media messages and call for equal amounts of healthy lifestyle messages in the media, at special events, during sporting activities, and elsewhere.

-X-

Alcohol Education

Teaching Young People the Skills To Say No

Our community is beginning to recognize the very serious consequences of drinking by young people, but there's more work yet to be done to prevent the often tragic results of teen drinking. This work must be done by all facets of the community, working in partnership to prevent the dangerous mix of teens and alcohol.

Education is the first line of defense in this battle to keep our young people healthy and safe. That education must begin at home, but the all-important role of our schools should not be overlooked.

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the Department of Health and Human Services recommends that all schools, beginning with the elementary grades and continuing through college, include alcohol- and risk-avoidance education in their curricula.

Schools can play an important role in preventing alcohol and other drug dependencies. Young people must be taught the cognitive skills to interpret and resist the interpersonal and media-based drinking messages that are directed toward them daily.

Educators can help young people develop ways to cope with the anxiety and pressure of growing up without turning to alcohol. Schools can help young people plan alternative activities that involve a lot of fun, but no alcohol.

Indeed, today we have to teach our youth math, science, and language skills, but we must also teach them to understand the allure of alcohol and the futility and dangers of drinking in order to fit in with the crowd.

-X-

Dram Shop Laws/Server Education

An intoxicated person leaves a bar, restaurant, or private home; stumbles into a car; and is the cause of a traffic crash within 15 minutes. This scenario happens all too often, especially with young drivers. Tragically, alcohol-related car crashes kill more young people than any other cause. Who is at fault? There's probably enough blame to go around.

There are numerous strategies for dealing with a problem that's reached crisis proportions in our community–underage drinking and youth drinking and driving. Many communities across the country are trying to stem the problem at the source–with the server of the alcohol.

More and more restaurant owners, bartenders, waiters and waitresses, and even individuals who host parties in their homes are being educated about the signs of intoxication, methods for dealing with intoxicated persons, and intervention techniques to prevent impaired persons from driving. In many jurisdictions, money collected through drinking while intoxicated fines and penalties are used to finance such programs.

Of course, in the case of persons under 21 years of age, any consumption or purchase of alcohol is illegal. Enforcing strict penalties and holding persons liable when they fail to follow this statute will have a strong deterrent effect. All young people should be asked for proof of age when they attempt to order a drink or purchase alcohol. All activities should provide nonalcoholic beverages when young people may be present.

Name of city is participating in a Teen Drinking Prevention Program developed by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services. One of the goals of the program is to communicate to our young people that alcohol is a drug and can destroy their future.

We're also here to remind the community that responsible service to young people is not to serve them at all!

-X-

The Influence of Alcohol Advertising

The Prevention Partnership: Parents Play a Key Role

Today, when alcohol-related incidents are claiming more young lives than any other cause, "do as I say and not as I do!" just isn't good enough. To prevent alcohol use by young people, all elements of a community must present a consistent message and clear expectations to the younger generation.

Schools, businesses, enforcement officials, the courts, and the health and prevention community all have an important role to play in preventing teen drinking. However, the foundation of alcohol education and prevention must begin in the home.

Research into successful prevention strategies shows that parents are an important influence on a young person's decision not to use alcohol and other drugs.

To fulfill this critical prevention role, parents must educate themselves concerning the signs of alcohol and other drug use. Second, they must help prepare their children for society's mixed messages concerning drinking. Arm your children with an accurate understanding of the effects of alcohol and an ability to resist the pressure to drink that they'll receive from their peers and the media.

Specifically, what can parents do to prevent their youth from using alcohol? Many things–

- Openly and clearly express concern about and disapproval for underage drinking.
- Present a positive model through your own responsible use of alcohol, if you drink.
- Present clear no-use rules and enforce them!
- Monitor your children's social activities.
- Monitor the alcohol supply in your home.
- Do not allow your children to host or attend parties that are not supervised by an adult.

-X-

Letter to the Editor

All newspapers print many of the letters they receive from readers. Writing letters to the editor is one simple way to deliver your message to the community.

Dear Editor:

All parents worry about their children's health and safety. We worry about them doing well in school and staying away from drugs. Unfortunately, there's something else we should caution them about, but too often we fail to do so. I'm referring to alcohol and the dangerous mix of alcohol and teenagers.

Alcohol-related incidents kill and injure many young people in America. A recent U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) report revealed that some 8 million American teenagers drink weekly and that nearly one-half million go on a weekly binge of five or more drinks in a row. And all this is taking place while alcohol purchase and possession by anyone under 21 years of age is illegal in all 50 States.

Simply put, we, this community, have made it too easy for young people to put their lives and the lives of others at risk through the use of alcohol. The first thing we must evaluate is the message we are sending to young people concerning drinking. What is the message of our own behavior? What is the message of lax enforcement of the law? And what messages do they receive through the media?

Name of town is establishing a teen drinking prevention program originally developed by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Department of Health and Human Services. This program is designed to give a local community the tools and strategies needed to create an effective local effort to curb underage drinking. This grassroots program will attempt to motivate individuals and communities as a whole to change those community norms that encourage alcohol use by young people.

A particularly frightening piece of information revealed by DHHS was that young people do not understand the intoxicating effects of alcohol. In fact, two out of three junior high school students could not tell the difference between an alcoholic and a nonalcoholic beverage.

Talk to your teens about drinking. Make sure their decisions are based on the facts—and not on a beer commercial or pressure from the kid down the block. Messages and materials are available to help. Contact the Name of city Teen Drinking Prevention Program local coordinator name at address for more information.

Sincerely,

Your name

Sample PSAs for Radio

Length: 10 Seconds Each

- Alcohol use is a leading cause of injury and death among teenagers in our community. If you're an educator, teach; if you're a parent, counsel; if you're a teen, don't drink.
- What's a leading cause of injury and death among teenagers? Alcohol! Educators...Parents...Teens—Know the facts. Prevent underage drinking.
- Teenagers and alcohol don't mix. Alcohol is a leading cause of death and injury among young people. Know the facts. Prevent underage drinking!
- The image of drinking is parties, good times, and being cool. The reality is car crashes, missed classes, broken promises, and gripping addiction. Learn the facts. They're sobering!
- If you're a teenager, the pressures to try alcohol are real. So are the consequences: car crashes, drownings, rape, and addiction. Do yourself a favor. Know the facts. Prevention works!
- Most teenagers think alcohol doesn't affect them. Most parents think their teens aren't drinking. Think again. Know the facts. They're sobering!
- Underage drinking makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. Alcohol and teenagers don't mix. Share the message with those you love.
- Alcohol use is a leading cause of death among teenagers in our community. Keep 'em alive. Enforce 21. Prevention works!
- Every 3 hours a teenager dies in an alcohol-related car crash. Keep 'em alive. Enforce 21. Prevention works!

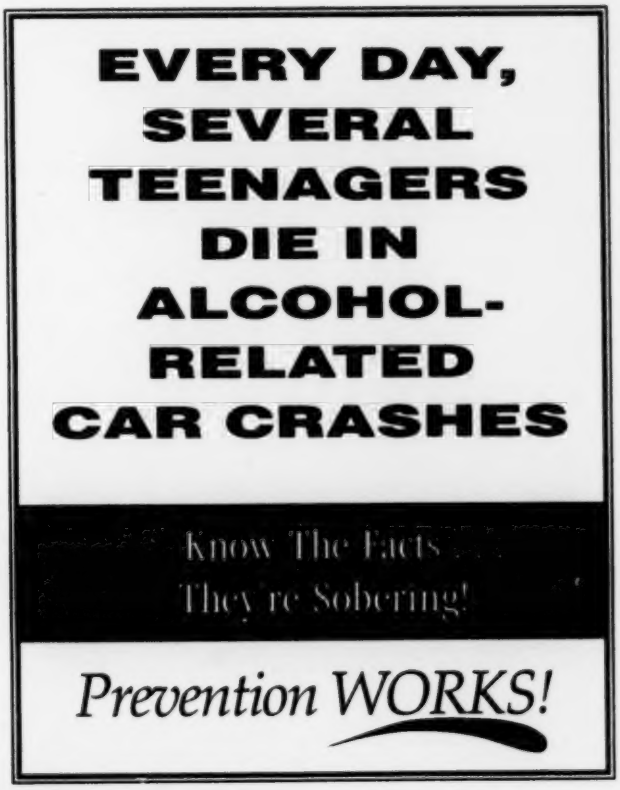
Length: 20 Seconds Each

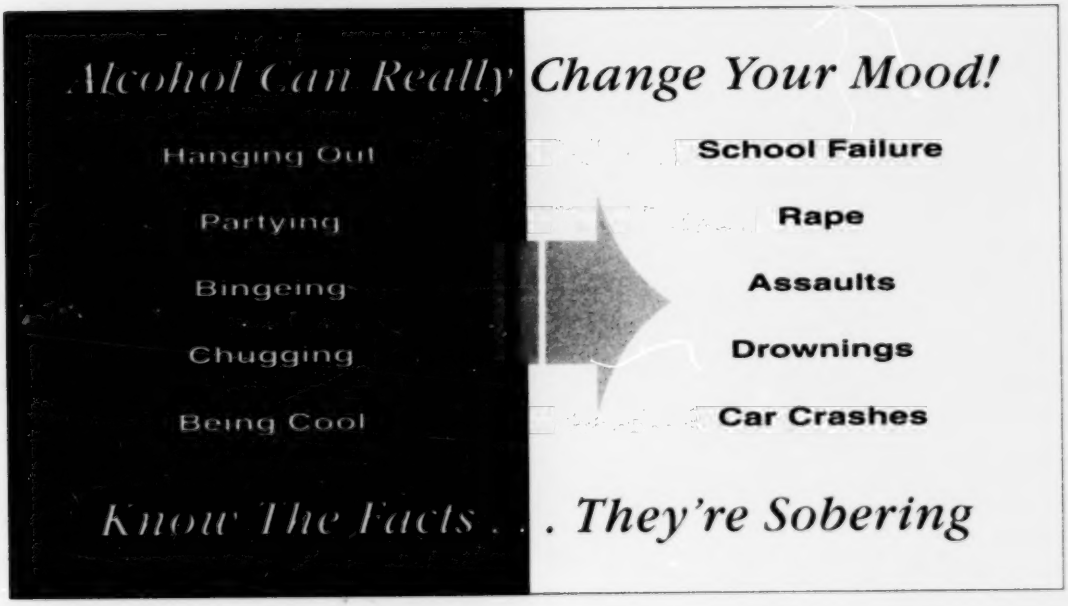
- The consequences of underage drinking are serious. Alcohol-related highway deaths are a major killer of teens and young adults today. Alcohol use is associated with youth homicides, suicides, and drownings. The solution is simple—if you're under age, don't be under the influence! Prevention works!
- The average college student consumes more than 34 gallons of alcohol a year. Half a million high school students report weekly drinking binges. Alcohol-related crashes are a leading cause of injury and death among teenagers. The numbers just don't add up, and it's everybody's problem!

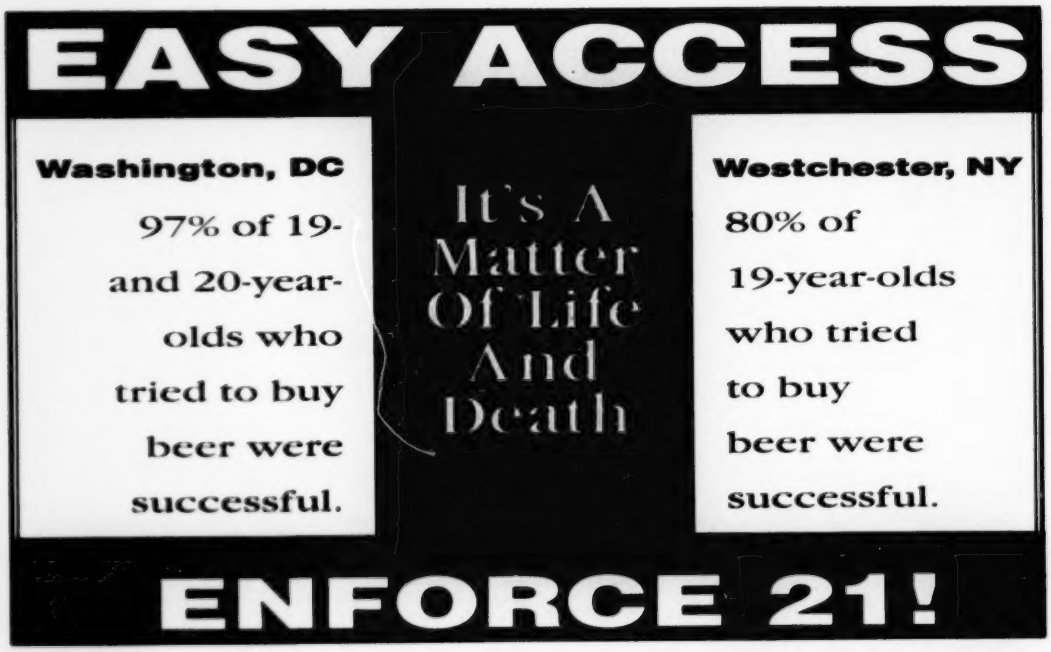
Length: 30 Seconds

- The average college student consumes more than 34 gallons of alcohol a year. Beer consumption by college students is just short of 4 billion beers. If these college beer cans were stacked end to end, the stack would reach the moon and beyond. The typical student spends more money on alcohol than on textbooks. Half a million high schoolers report weekly drinking binges. Alcohol-related crashes are the leading cause of injury and death in teenagers. The numbers just don't add up, and it's everybody's problem!

Print PSAs


EVERY DAY, SEVERAL TEENAGERS DIE IN ALCOHOL-RELATED CAR CRASHES
Know The Facts
They're Sobering!
Prevention WORKS!


Alcohol Can Really Change Your Mood!
Hanging Out
Partying
Bingeing
Chugging
Being Cool
School Failure
Rape
Assaults
Drownings
Car Crashes
Know The Facts . . . They're Sobering


EASY ACCESS
Washington, DC
97% of 19- and 20-year-olds who tried to buy beer were successful.
It's A Matter Of Life And Death
Westchester, NY
80% of 19-year-olds who tried to buy beer were successful.
ENFORCE 21!

MISCONCEPTIONS

2.6 million teenagers
don't know
that a person can die
from an alcohol overdose.

And that could kill them!

KNOW THE FACTS

Prevent Underage Drinking

30

Point-of-Purchase Display Card

Thank You for Not Selling Alcohol to Our Teens!

Prevention WORKS!

Program and CSAP logos can also be found on the inside back cover.

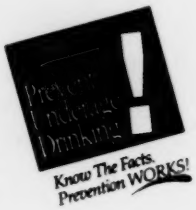
Radio Public Service Guide

The following Radio Public Service Guide *is designed to be distributed to public service or community affairs directors at radio stations within your community.*

All radio stations devote some programming time to public service messages and public affairs programming on issues of concern to the community.

Encourage radio stations in your community to support your effort to create healthy environments for young people and to help young people say no to alcohol and other drugs. Contact community affairs staff at your local radio stations to inform them of the Teen Drinking Prevention Program. And, if possible, personally deliver a kit to the public service director at each station.

Dear Public Service Director:



Alcohol use claims many young lives in our community. Despite the fact that the purchase and possession of alcoholic beverages by persons under 21 years of age is illegal in all 50 States, young people have easy access to alcohol, too often leading to automobile crashes, drownings, rape, suicide, school failure, and criminal activity or victimization.

In large measure, the environment in which our young people reside influences their decisions concerning the use of alcohol and other drugs. Unfortunately, many young people are bombarded with messages from their environment, their peers, and the media that drinking is the way to be successful, to be "cool." The hard facts are that today several young people will die in alcohol-related car crashs.

The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services developed a Teen Drinking Prevention Program, in which our community is taking part. Enclosed in this mailing are live PSA copy scripts and prerecorded news actualities concerning the seriousness of the underage drinking problem, how it affects the community, and what a community can do to prevent it.

Alcohol use by young people makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. Your station's participation in this effort to communicate healthy messages to young people will be a community service.

Sincerely,

Name of teen drinking prevention program director

Public Service and the Teen Drinking Epidemic

Many factors contribute to a young person's decision to use or not use alcohol and other drugs. The attitudes and norms of the community we live in are large contributing factors to the choices we all make.

This Is What Your Station Can Do To Help

The power of the media to inform, educate, and influence is well known. Your station can have a positive impact on the community and help build an environment that encourages healthy choices by young people.

We encourage your station to implement a public service message campaign to build public awareness of the seriousness of the teen drinking problem and to communicate drinking's hazards to young people.

In addition to public service messages, please consider the following activities:

- Join or help build communitywide networks attempting to prevent underage drinking in your community. Have station executives sit on the boards of such organizations or lend their expertise in program planning, communications, fundraising, and the like. Lend your station's financial support to the organization.
- Lend your facilities and expertise to local students interested in producing public service messages of their own.
- Sponsor "no-alcohol-use" messages and events at such traditionally "high-risk" occasions such as proms, spring break, homecoming, and so forth.
- Offer your station's on-air talent as host or hostess of alcohol-free activities for young people.
- Produce an original public service message campaign focusing on your community. Use local teenagers in the spots and pretest the messages with young community residents.
- Evaluate your station's programming. What are the messages, both overt and subtle concerning alcohol? What is your programming suggesting to your community's younger residents about drinking?
- Work with your station's news director to build coverage of the teen drinking crisis. Suggest guests and topics for your station's public affairs and discussion programming concerning underage drinking.
- Ask on-air personalities and talk show hosts to eliminate humorous and irresponsible comments about alcohol use and abuse!

Public Service Announcement Scripts

LENGTH: 10 Seconds

❒Alcohol use is a leading cause of injury and death among teenagers in our community. If you're an educator, teach; if you're a parent, counsel; if you're a young person, do not drink.

❒ What's a leading cause of injury and death among teenagers? Alcohol! Educators...parents...teens–Know the facts... Prevention works!

❒Teenagers and alcohol don't mix. Alcohol is a leading cause of death and injury among young people. Know the facts... Prevent underage drinking.

❒The image of drinking is parties, good times, and being cool. The reality is car crashes, missed classes, broken promises, and gripping addiction. Know the facts... Prevent underage drinking.

❒If you're a teenager, the pressures to try alcohol are real; so are the consequences: car crashes, drownings, rape, and addictions. Do yourself a favor. Know the facts... Prevent underage drinking.

❒Most teenagers think alcohol doesn't affect them. Most parents think that their kids aren't drinking. Think again. Know the facts... Prevent underage drinking.

❒Underage drinking makes our highways less safe, our schools less effective, and our future less certain. Alcohol and teenagers don't mix. Share the message with those you love–Prevention works!

❒Underage drinking leads to school failure, car crashes, criminal activity, victimization, and even death. But it doesn't have to. Prevention works!

LENGTH: 15 Seconds

❒The consequences of underage drinking are high. Alcohol-related highway death is the major killer of teens and young adults today. Alcohol use is associated with youth homicides, suicides, and drownings. The solution is simple–if you're underage, don't be under the influence!

❒The average college student consumes more than 34 gallons of alcohol a year. Half a million high school students report weekly drinking binges. Alcohol-related accidents are a leading cause of injury and death among teenagers. The numbers just don't add up, and it's everybody's problem!

Actuality Scripts

(1) LENGTH: 1:00

A RECENT SERIES OF REPORTS FROM THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES REVEALED THAT 10 MILLION AMERICAN TEENAGERS DRINK MONTHLY, 8 MILLION EVERY WEEK.

THESE NUMBERS ARE ALARMING. WHAT IS MORE FRIGHTENING IS THE COMBINATION OF EASY ACCESS THAT OUR YOUNG PEOPLE HAVE TO ALCOHOL AND THEIR LACK OF UNDERSTANDING OF ITS INTOXICATING EFFECTS.

IN TOO MANY COMMUNITIES, ENFORCEMENT OF THE 21-YEAR-OLD DRINKING LAW IS LAX. THIS RECENT STUDY FOUND THAT TWO-THIRDS OF THE TEENAGERS WHO DRINK–ALMOST 8 MILLION BOYS AND GIRLS–GET THEIR ALCOHOL THE EASY WAY: THEY WALK INTO A STORE AND BUY IT.

THE 21-YEAR-OLD DRINKING LAW WAS PUT INTO EFFECT TO SAVE LIVES, AND IT DOES. WE MUST REFOCUS OUR EFFORTS NOT TO ONLY ENFORCE THE LAW, BUT TO COUNTERACT THE MIXED MESSAGES AND MISINFORMATION THAT YOUNG PEOPLE RECEIVE CONCERNING ALCOHOL USE.

YOUNG PEOPLE MUST BE TAUGHT THAT ALCOHOL IS A DRUG AND THAT ITS USE CAN LEAD TO FURTHER DRUG USE AND SERIOUS CONSEQUENCES NOT ALWAYS ASSOCIATED WITH A FEW BEERS: SCHOOL FAILURE, RAPE, CRIMINAL ACTIVITY, VICTIMIZATION, DROWNING, OR SUICIDE.

THE CRIMES, INJURIES, AND DEATHS THAT RESULT FROM UNDERAGE DRINKING ARE PREVENTABLE.

(2) LENGTH: 45 Seconds

ALCOHOL USE BY YOUNG PEOPLE HAS REACHED NEARLY EPIDEMIC PROPORTIONS, ACCORDING TO DATA RECENTLY RELEASED BY THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES.

ACCORDING TO THE DEPARTMENT, 10 MILLION AMERICAN TEENAGERS DRINK MONTHLY, 8 MILLION ON A WEEKLY BASIS.

DRINKING OFTEN STARTS EARLY AND BUILDS QUICKLY. THE DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DATA SUGGEST THAT ONE IN EVERY EIGHT 12-YEAR-OLDS IS A BINGE DRINKER–CONSUMING FIVE OR MORE DRINKS IN A ROW. NEARLY A HALF MILLION TEENAGERS GO ON WEEKLY DRINKING BINGES.

THIS ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION BY YOUTH HAS SERIOUS REPERCUSSIONS FOR TEENAGERS AND FOR ENTIRE COMMUNITIES. ALCOHOL IS RELATED TO OR IS THE CAUSE OF DEATH OF OR INJURY TO MORE YOUNG PEOPLE THAN ANY OTHER CAUSE. ALL TOO OFTEN, ALCOHOL USE IS THE CULPRIT WHEN YOUNG PEOPLE DIE OR ARE INJURED IN CAR CRASHES, ARE INVOLVED IN CRIMINAL ACTIVITY OR VICTIMIZATION, OR HAVE TROUBLE IN SCHOOL OR GETTING ALONG WITH OTHERS.

THIS IS _____, REPORTING FROM WASHINGTON.

(3) LENGTH: 45 Seconds

WALK INTO ANY HIGH SCHOOL CLASSROOM TODAY AND THE ODDS ARE THAT FIVE MEMBERS OF THE CLASS AREN'T PAYING ATTENTION BECAUSE THEY'RE RECOVERING FROM LAST NIGHT'S DRINKING BINGE.

ACCORDING TO AN ANNUAL POLL CONDUCTED BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF STUDENT COUNCILS, ALCOHOL USE IS THE LEADING PROBLEM IN SCHOOLS TODAY. THE NATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR SURVEY FOUND THAT 9 OUT OF 10 HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS HAVE TRIED ALCOHOL AND NEARLY 6 OUT OF 10 ARE REGULAR DRINKERS.

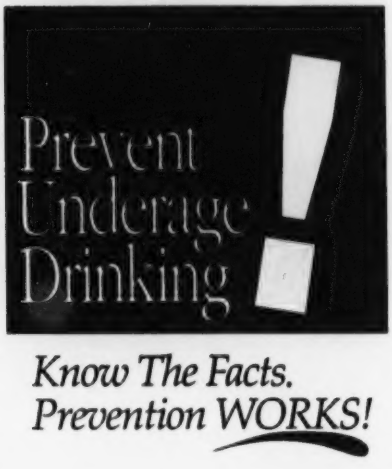
WHITE AND AMERICAN-INDIAN MALE AND FEMALE HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS ARE THE HEAVIEST DRINKERS AMONG THEIR PEERS. NON-DRINKING RATES ARE HIGHEST AMONG AFRICAN-AMERICAN AND ASIAN-AMERICAN YOUTH.

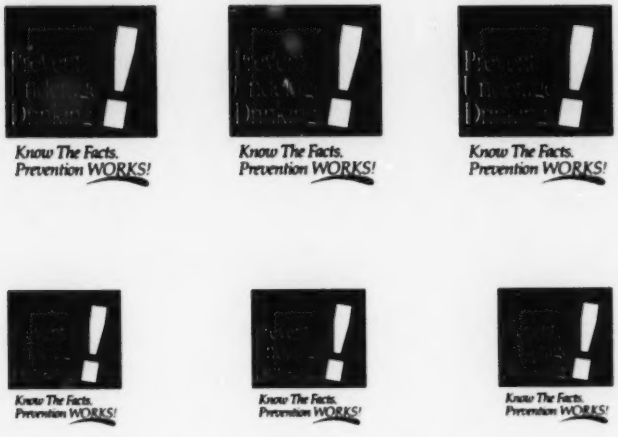
ACCORDING TO THE POLL RESULTS, YOUNG PEOPLE DRINK BEER AND WINE COOLERS BECAUSE THEY ARE INEXPENSIVE AND EASY TO PURCHASE. TEENAGERS ARE OFTEN UNDER THE MISTAKEN BELIEF THAT YOU CANNOT BECOME INTOXICATED FROM BEER AND WINE COOLERS.

THIS IS _____, REPORTING FROM WASHINGTON.

For more information about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse prevention, contact the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information, P.O. Box 2345, Rockville, MD 20847-2345, 1-800-729-6686, 301-468-2600, or TDD 1-800-487-4889.

Program Logos/ Tag Lines





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41